

## ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

SONGS OF WILD BIRDS. By Albert R. Brand. Published by Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York. 1934. Pp. 1-91. Price, \$2.00.

The book contains one or two chapters on the subject of bird song in general, and about thirty-four pages are devoted to the descriptions of songs of particular birds—all interesting enough. The feature of the book, however, is the accompanying phonograph records of wild birds' songs, which are carried in a pocket on the cover. A year or two ago we learned indirectly that a young man at Cornell University was working on the reproduction of bird songs by modern mechanical methods. In the spring of this year Dr. A. A. Allen made a lecture tour through the middle west exhibiting the results of these efforts. Just a few weeks later Mr. Brand's book with the phonograph records was placed upon the market. The fact of the matter is that men have now recorded mechanically the songs of wild, free birds as they sang in their native haunts. Most of our readers may not care for a detailed explanation of the mechanical devices used in this work, even if we could present it (but we think a little more of a description in the book itself would have been acceptable). However, an enlarged microphone is set up as near as possible to the singing bird. The sound waves which fall upon the microphone are converted into electrical energy. The electrical waves are then amplified and transformed into light waves. These light waves are then photographed on the films. The film is developed and can be reproduced by the movie projector onto the light screen or reconverted into sound. Of course the making of a phonograph record is an additional process. It is to be noted, however, that the phonograph record reproduces the bird's own voice, which has never been accomplished before, we believe. Thirty-five wild bird songs are recorded on the two record disks which accompany this book. A few of the songs are rather weak, perhaps because of the distance of the birds; others are loud and clear. The Bobolink song is one of the best, and lacks none of the vivacity of the living song. The Whip-poor-will's song is reproduced with such fidelity that one might close his eyes and imagine himself in the haunts of the bird. Perhaps we should again assure the reader that the records are reproductions of the bird's voice, not of whistled imitations by some clever human. These records alone are worth the price of the book, and we can cheerfully recommend them.—T. C. S.

THE BIRDS OF DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK, FROM RECORDS COMPILED BY MAUNSELL S. CROSBY. By Ludlow Griscom. Trans. Linn. Soc., N. Y., III, 1933, pp. 1-184. Price, \$2.00. (Address Sec. Linnaean Society, W. 77th and Central Park, N. Y.).

Mr. Griscom has done another very creditable piece of work in the compilation of this local list. An introduction covering sixty-seven pages, and divided into eight chapters, precedes the systematic list. Species of hypothetical occurrence are not assembled into a separate list, but are enclosed in brackets in the body of the list. Since the note-books of Mr. Maunsell S. Crosby furnished the material for this report it is fitting that a portrait of Mr. Crosby and a picture of his home, which we take to be a country estate, be included. Chapter X is a bibliography of Dutchess County ornithology which is, doubtless, intended to include all of Mr. Crosby's own writings; two titles in the WILSON BULLETIN for 1925 were overlooked.—T. C. S.